

Coach House Church

BEACONS

MEETING GOD

17TH JUNE 2020

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to meet God face to face? I don't mean after death, but here and now whilst still alive in this world? Now we believe that Jesus was God incarnate, and during the time that He lived on earth God was walking about amongst people, only they didn't know it at the time. Peter, James, and John saw His divine glory revealed on the mount of transfiguration, but they were told to keep this to themselves until after Jesus' resurrection. Of course, almost no one living now has ever seen Jesus, though there are reports from the Islamic world of people becoming followers of Jesus after seeing Him in dreams and visions. But seeing Jesus in a dream or vision is not quite the same as seeing Him as He was when He lived in the Holy Land 2,000 years ago in flesh and blood like us.

As a young Christian I met someone who did meet Jesus face to face. He had been a career criminal who had been in prison for violent crime. In fact, he was in prison when he had a physical encounter with Jesus in his cell. It wasn't a vision or a dream but a physical face to face encounter. One night, this person, whose name was Fred Lemon, was lying on his bed in his cell; he had a special hatred for one of the prison guards, and he was lying there wide awake planning how he was going to stab and kill that "screw" the following day. While he was lying there seething with hatred towards this "screw", and enjoying the thought of what he was going to do to him the next day, he heard a distinct click like a door opening, only his cell door did not open. The next thing he was aware of was three men standing over him as he lay on his bunk. One of them introduced Himself as Jesus; the other two were angels. Jesus spent some time speaking with him.

As a result, Fred Lemon instantly became a follower of Jesus – a very enthusiastic follower of Jesus, in fact. Incidentally, when Jesus and the two angels left him, he again heard a click, but the cell door hadn't opened. And he didn't stab the prison

officer the next day. As a result of this tremendous conversion of Fred Lemon and the change in his character - he was not a petty criminal, he was into serious violent crime - when he left prison he went to different churches sharing his testimony, and members of the Christian Police Association accompanied him to vouch for him, that he'd been a professional, violent criminal with prison time, who had been miraculously transformed by his physical encounter with Jesus in his prison cell one night. He visited my church in Beswick, where I was at the time. He wrote his testimony in a book: Breakout.

Some years later I met a lady in a church where I'd moved to who shared with me that she too had met Jesus physically. She was already a Christian when this happened. She was lying ill in a hospital ward. It was during the morning and the ward was quite busy. But she said that Jesus walked up to her bed, sat beside her, took her hands in His and spoke to her. She said that there were two angels with Him; they stood by the foot of her bed. No one else in the ward was aware of the special visitor and the ward continued just as busy as ever. Jesus and the two angels walked out of the ward when He'd finished speaking to her.

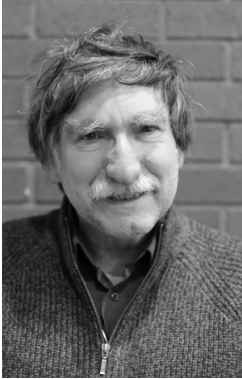
There is a passage in the Bible which is a favourite of mine.

It is found in Exodus 24, verses 8 – 11: So Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."

Then Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel. Under His feet was a work like a pavement made of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself. But God did not lay His hand on the nobles of Israel; they saw Him, and they ate and drank.

These men, the leaders of the people of Israel, were invited to meet with God and to eat with Him! They climbed up to the top of Mount Sinai or Horeb as it is also known, and they stepped out of this world into another. They must have been fearful on the way up, but there was no need to fear because God loved them and wanted to fellowship with them; and what better way than with a meal! I believe they met God the Son. They didn't know Him as Jesus then, but as Yahweh, the one true Creator God. Paul tells us: For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity dwells in bodily form. (Col 2:9). And this has been so from all eternity. I can only explain it by saying that God is the supreme Time Lord.

I still think that most of us will never meet Jesus physically in this life; we walk by faith and not by sight. And Jesus said that those who believe in Him without seeing Him are blessed. But we are called to fellowship with Him, and who knows, since He is very gracious, we can never know what might happen!



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